

# Traits of Effective Evangelistic Churches



## Our Research:

- Random sample of 1,000 church with data from 2013 and 2016.
- Margin of error +/- 3.1% at the 95% confidence level.
- Calculated the average conversion ratio (average worship attendance/total annual conversions) to be 19:1. Remember, lower ratios are better.
- Defined “effective evangelistic churches” to be those with a ratio less than 10:1.
- Only 5% of the churches met the EEC (effective evangelistic churches) defined parameters.
- We interviewed a significant number of leaders from these EECs to get their stories.

# The Big Three Factors



**“Intentionality”** was the redundant word we heard in these interviews. Evangelism does not happen **unless the church is intentional** about it. Here are the three primary conduits of intentionality.

### Themes:

- Intentional evangelistic community outreach
- Intentional personal relationship with a prayer to have a gospel conversation
- Vacation Bible School (the only programmatic approach noted by a significant number of leaders) with an evangelistic intentionality

### Quotes:

- “[Our church] studied its community and **learned the needs and desires of the people**. Then we **developed ministries that bridged the gap** for us to share the gospel and make disciples.” - Pastor Timothy Pigg
- “[We reach our community by] **loving and building relationships** with neighbors, coworkers, and those considered ‘divine appointments’. Most of those baptized here are through **relationship evangelism**.” - Pastor Matt Swain
- “We are reaching our community through both time-honored methods and new, creative methods. One of the most effective ways has been through me writing our **VBS materials that are highly evangelistic, educational, and incredibly fun**. Our VBS is now the summer event for children on our end of the county and that one week draws the attention to families from three counties surrounding us.” - Pastor Alan Stewart

# The Rule and Power of Prayer in Effective Evangelistic Churches



# Prayer plays a **key, structured,** and **foundational** role in evangelistic efforts.

## Themes:

- Foundational in all aspects
- List of lost people to pray for
- Weekly prayer service with an emphasis on evangelism

## Quotes:

- “It all **starts with prayer**. I have a prayer ‘hit list’ in **which I pray specifically for the salvation of people**... I share this frequently... and encourage everyone to have a ‘hit list’. When folks come into our membership class we share this prayer strategy.” - Pastor Norman Lewis Sullivan
- “**Prayer is a vital part** in our evangelism efforts. We are **constantly praying for our evangelism ministries** through our daily early morning prayer services, as well as prayer meetings once a month to pray for our ministries and missions teams. Our church also has an intercessory prayer team that prays around the clock.” - Pastor Benjamin Yi
- “Our mid-week prayer service is limited to a word of welcome, opening song, and prayer. Then **the rest of the hour is strictly limited to prayer**. People can offer praises, and prayer requests. We ask that is not be only about lumps and bumps, but about **lost souls**. The hour passes too quickly.” - Pastor Michael Schwalm

**The Pastor:  
The Primary Example and Pacesetter in  
Effective Evangelistic Churches**



It is the pastor's responsibility to **lead evangelistic efforts** as a church's **evangelistic emphasis** is synonymous with its **leader's example**.

## Themes:

- Leads by example
- Shares witnessing experiences with congregation
- Visiting with non-Christians

## Quotes:

- "I would often **talk about gospel sharing opportunities** and people I was 'working on' during church council meetings, deacons meetings, etc. It was awesome to see how this kind of **gospel intentionality was caught** by the leadership of the church, and subsequently, **by the membership as well.**" - Pastor Tony Wolfe
- "There are 11 pastors on our staff and we actually are **accountable to each other to share our faith**. We are intentional whenever we teach to share our own personal testimonies of sharing and winning others to Jesus. **Our example to our flock is a BIG deal** and we know it." - Pastor Tom R. McCormick
- "If I can **take my congregation along with me** to lunch, or into homes with the community, and intentionally prepare them to take note of how I have spiritual conversations that lead to the gospel presentation, then **they will see beyond just a training program** how possible it is to share the gospel as they go." - Pastor Chris Kendall

# The Role of Groups



Small groups are primarily used for **discipleship**, but many contain **teaching** that has an **evangelistic emphasis**.

### Themes:

- Discipleship/evangelistic teaching
- Open group encouraged to invite the lost

### Quotes:

- "Our groups are used to **connect people deeper** in their personal walk with Jesus, and also connect them with our church. They are **intentional** and meant to be used **to bring people in**. We try to stay away from being only inclusive or exclusive, but instead **be reaching**." - Pastor Dewayne Gibson
- "Most of the groups are used as a step in the process to help **move seekers or casual attenders forward** into relationship with Christ. They are **not the primary entry point** for evangelism and outreach." - Pastor Ben Jones
- "We task every small group with a **mission and plan to sow the gospel within the community** through mission projects. Each group is responsible for such projects that range from backyard Bible club, to construction type projects, and everything in between. We make sure that they know that **missional intentionality exists** when the gospel is communicated." - Pastor Chris Kendall

**How is evangelism training implemented?**



Most EECs **do not have an emphasis** on evangelism training programs.

## Themes:

- Pastor-led
- In membership classes

## Quotes:

- “We consider our **discipleship ministries our evangelism training**. We have multiple groups within our church that are meeting weekly for conversations about God and with God through His Word. Evangelism is always emphasized when our discipleship groups meet.” - Pastor Greg Cook
- “We offer **pastoral led evangelism classes**. Each week we **go into the community and meet tangible needs**. For instance, renting out a gas station and pumping free gas. I also teach the attendees how to **turn that into a spiritual conversation**.” - Dr. Steve Freeman
- “We have our **two methods of evangelism** that we train our church members on and help and encourage them to evangelize. We have training for these evangelism techniques as a **part of our membership process** and we review these methods through **discipleship, cell groups, and evangelism training**.” - Pastor Benjamin Yi

**What approaches are effective in getting the gospel to the community?**



Effective evangelistic initiatives move members and leaders **outside the church walls** and **into the community** through **outreach, events,** and **relationships.**

## Themes:

- Community Outreach
  - Food bank
  - Recovery ministry
  - Investing in local groups
  - Meeting needs
  - Sports ministry
- Host Community Events
  - Tailgates
  - Easter egg hunts
  - Holiday events
  - Block parties
- Personal Relationship

## Quotes:

- “Our church reaches out to **specific groups in the community**, specifically **the homeless ministry and refugee ministry**. We not only support and sponsor events that reach out to the community, we also use opportunities such as church scholarships for college students to support our local fire departments and police departments children and other local children with the gospel.” - Pastor Benjamin Yi
- “We get the gospel into the community through **different events** primarily. We host tailgate Sundays and invite well known Christian speakers in. We have a community wide Trunk or Treat which will have 2,500 in attendance. We have a community wide Easter Egg hunt.” - Pastor Geoff Prows
- “[We use] **attractional events** to get people on our campus, then **follow up** with personal evangelism, then **channel them** into Sunday School and worship and the 50 or so ministries of our church.” - Pastor Robin Butler

**How does a non-evangelistic church  
become evangelistic?**



# One word (again): **intentionality.**

## Themes:

- Get outside the walls/meet the needs
- Have an evangelistic pastor
- Pray

## Quotes:

- **“The church must look like the neighborhood that surrounds it** or it has vacated its mission. If you hear those in the church starting to complain about the new people that are starting to attend your church, you must remember that it is not your church but His church. If you are going to reach those around you, **you must be willing to do whatever it takes no matter what the cost.**” - Pastor Robert George
- “It is hard work winning people to Christ and even harder to make disciples out of them... Evangelism and discipleship require **consistent intentionality** and it must **start with the pastor and staff** and trickle down from there.” - Pastor Robin Butler
- **“Get outside the walls of the church.** We come to church for corporate worship, but we are the church for the outside. People who are not outwardly focused must evaluate where they are and how they can do things better. **We need to take the church to them,** because they aren't coming to us.” - Dr. Steve Freeman