



## Your Audience is OUT There -- Here's how you can bring 'em IN

Audiences for any kind of performance are fickle (unless they have a family member in the show!). With the best of intentions to see a performance, somehow when the date rolls around they manage to miss it, to forget or find themselves just too tired or busy to show up. **Your job is to make sure nothing gets in the way of their attending your event.**

### HERE'S HOW YOU CAN DO IT...

1. Make sure as many people as possible know about it, both inside your congregation, in other area church congregations, and in the local community at large;
2. Make it seem compelling, inviting, and fun;
3. Make sure there are reminders that its happening in as many places and formats as you can manage, including posters, flyers, emails, and the website;
4. Make them feel like they'll really be missing something special if they don't attend;
5. Include as many people as possible in the promotion, preparation, and running of the event itself – the more people who feel invested in the event, the more will come;
6. Keep reminding your audience the show is coming soon, and how exciting an event it will be – folks have a lot of other things going on in their lives, and they need reminding to keep your event at the top of their "to do" list.
7. Start as soon as possible promoting the event, and increase the fuss you make as the event gets closer.

### **MAKE SURE YOU:**

- **Put up lots of posters:** Visit the Gospel website and download the pre-designed black & white posters. Customize them with your church info and distribute them everywhere in your community. Make sure there's on at every grocery store, corner store, laundromat, coffee shop, community centre, mall – anywhere there's a bulletin board or a spot where local events get publicized. Post several copies in your church and distribute copies to all the other local churches, inviting them to attend. Attach posters to telephone poles in the downtown area, if there isn't an ordinance against it. One person with a car accomplish this in two hours or less. **If at all possible, make sure the posters go up 4 weeks in advance**, and send someone around to re-poster any that have been removed after two weeks, and again just before the event. Some churches have enlisted their Sunday School classes to colour in the posters before they get posted, which both involves the youth and their families and make the posters more noticeable around town.
- **Feature the performance prominently on your Church Website for as long a period prior to the showdate as possible.**

- **Use Email to your advantage!** If you have an email newsletter system, feature the upcoming performance in the newsletter as soon as possible and make sure it is included in every issue thereafter until the performance date. Several of our best-attended performances have made successful use of this technique starting two to three months in advance. If you don't have a pre-existing email newsletter, consider establishing one. An email list of your congregation can help you reach congregation members for all your church events, not just *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*.
- **Feature the performance in your Church Bulletin (& Newsletter) for 4 weeks prior to the performance.** Download the Bulletin inserts from the gospel website, or use the three-to-a-page flyers. Make these available in community locations for pickup as well, so folks can post a reminder on their refrigerator or bulletin board at home.
- **Get the local media on board:** Download the press release from the Gospel website and customize with your church info. Send a copy to all the local newspapers ("Features" or "Arts & Entertainment" editor, or the religious news column, if there is one – if a very small paper, then send it to the editor) and media outlets (Radio, TV), and follow up with a phone call to confirm they received it. Most newspapers also have church listings and/or free event listings – arrange for your *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* performance to be listed in these for up to a month prior to the event.
- **Distribute flyers (or bulletin inserts) around your community**, including other churches (of same or different denominations). The more people know about the performance, the more people will come!
- Make sure the Minister mentions *The Gospel According to Saint Mark* from the pulpit for several weeks in advance, making it clear that the text is the full text of the book of Saint Mark from the Bible. It's a pretty impressive achievement both in storytelling and memorization!

#### **THE WEEK OF THE PERFORMANCE:**

- **Make copies of the program** (on the website) **to give out at the performance.** It gives the audience some information about us and the show, and makes people feel more at ease in the period before the performance begins. The number of copies required varies with the congregation and the amount of pre-show publicity (30 to 110 copies)
- **Make arrangements for Coffee/Juice and snacks for the audience at intermission.** This assists the evening to go well in a number of ways – it reinforces the community nature of the event; it ensures everyone's blood sugar level stays up so that they can comfortably focus on the second half of the show; and it gives the audience a way to begin to process & discuss what they are seeing, since food is rarely served that doesn't spark conversation!
- If you have not already done so, **be in contact with Matthew & Jennifer to review any potential technical issues** -- the sound system /CD player, location of the centre aisle, any lighting issues of which you are aware, etc.