

Compassion Sunday Sample Services and Activities

Here are a few examples of how Compassion's message may be incorporated into Compassion Sunday activities. The options are endless but we hope these examples will spark your creativity and help you see what will work best for your congregation. For additional guidance, feel free to call Compassion's Advocates Network at (800) 336-7535, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. MT, Monday through Friday.

Sunday Morning Worship Service:

Any or all of the following may be used during a Compassion Sunday worship service.

Set up sponsorship sign-up tables at every main exit from the auditorium/sanctuary

- A sign-up table is the single most important part of Compassion Sunday and should be included in every Compassion Sunday activity. Whether presenting in a service, small group or Sunday school class, or if you are placing an announcement in your church's bulletin, a sign-up table should be set up so interested people have a readily available way to sponsor a child.
- Use the Compassion table covering and a tabletop display. Order them with your Planning and Order Form.
- Have the sign-up table set up for two to three weeks after the Compassion Sunday presentation. This allows those who could not stop by or who were absent to respond at a later time.
- Set up the sign-up table at midweek services. These are often more relaxed and less crowded and provide an additional opportunity for people to respond.
- Make copies of select items from the Family Sponsorship Kit and hand them out to families who decide to sponsor a child.
- Have helium-filled balloons available at the table to give to each person who sponsors a child. Balloons are available in the Church Promotional Kit. They are effective attention getters.
- Gather the new sponsors and have a group balloon release to signify releasing children from poverty.

Sermon with the theme of children or ministry to the poor

- Compassion Sunday Sample Sermons — available for download at <http://www.compassion.com/share/compassionsunday/downloadableresources/default.htm>.
- Include a direct call for sponsorship with instructions to go to the sign-up table and select a child. If it is mentioned early in the sermon or if the sermon is not near the end of the service, repeat this announcement at the end of the service.

Special music during the offertory

- Music available on the *Compassion Sunday Presentation* DVD.

Songs, readings and prayers with the themes of children and the poor

- If your church is liturgical, see the Compassion Sunday Liturgy for a suggested service.
- Consider having children lead the prayer or read Scripture.
- Intersperse facts about the needs of children at appropriate places during worship or prayer time.

Announcement in the church bulletin three weeks prior to Compassion Sunday

- This may include a statistic about the needs of children or an applicable Scripture to increase awareness.
- Refer to examples provided in the Compassion Sunday Bulletin Announcement Text in the Toolkit or online at <http://compassion.com/share/compassionsunday/downloadableresources/default.htm>.

Announcement about the opportunity to sponsor during announcement time

A Compassion Sunday banner

- Hang a banner (available individually or in the Church Promotional Kit) at the entrance to or on the outside of your church for several weeks leading up to and after your event.

One or more sponsors give a testimony about their sponsorship experience

- What has sponsorship meant to the family? Include a reference to the Family Sponsorship Kit items that you plan to make available at the sign-up table.
- How has sponsorship affected their faith or their worldview?
- If they have met their child, what was that experience like?
- Have a teen or a child talk about the impact sponsorship has had.
- Read a portion from a sponsored child's letter.
- Provide "Join Me" buttons for all current sponsors and ask them to wear them for several weeks leading up to Compassion Sunday.

Show a video about sponsorship

- Selections of various lengths are available on the *Compassion Sunday* DVD.

Present a skit about the impact of sponsorship or the needs of children

- Skit scripts are available to download at <http://www.compassion.com/share/compassionsunday/downloadableresources/default.htm>.

Bulletin inserts

- Bulletin inserts give people an opportunity to respond after they get home. While not as effective as having Child Packets at a sign-up table, people who don't want to take the time to select a child may do so later. If your church doesn't use bulletins, the inserts can be used as brochures. You can place one on every seat instead of handing them out at the door.
- Provide prayer cards (masters available in the Church Promotional Kit) to each member of the church. Place them in the bulletin or on every seat.

Sunday School Classes and Weekday Meetings:

In addition to the suggestions listed above for the worship service, incorporate the theme of the needs of children living in poverty into other segments of your Sunday morning and weekday services.

A fellowship dinner after church or at midweek that has a theme

- Serve food typical of one of the countries where Compassion works.
- Serve a simple meal of beans and rice with modest portions to make the point that most of the world eats differently than we typically do.
- Table tents with facts about the needs of children can be placed on each table.
- Children can decorate place mats that can be laminated and used at the dinner and then taken home for daily use. Refer to the Family Sponsorship Kit on your Planning and Order Form for a place mat master.
- A video can be shown after dinner to explain the benefits of sponsorship.
- Current sponsors can share testimonies about how sponsorship has affected their lives, or give a short educational talk on the needs of children and what Compassion provides.
- If your church has a large group of sponsors, invite them to stay after dinner for a letter-writing and prayer time for their sponsored children. Provide stickers, paper, bookmarks and coloring pages to include in their letters.

Adult Sunday school classes and home fellowships as well as children's church, children's Sunday school and youth groups can focus on the theme of the needs of children.

- See the *Compassion Sunday* DVD for segments to use with these groups.
- Ask sponsors to give testimonies.
- Use the Tony Campolo on the Kingdom of God study guide in the weeks leading up to Compassion Sunday.
- Use the Mission Haiti study guide and video with children.
- Refer to the Ideas for Presenting to Children and Youth handout available for download at <http://www.compassion.com/share/compassionsunday/downloadableresources/default.htm>.
- The Church Promotional Kit contains coloring sheets to be used in children's church or Sunday school classes.
- The Family Sponsorship Kit contains the book *A Country Far Away* by Nigel Gray and Philippe Dupasquier that can be used in Sunday school class. Activity sheets are also available in this kit.