**Planning a Relationship Building Event for September 2022**

**Who are your trying to reach?** It’s far easier to design a successful event for a specific group of people. Use the list below to help you create a target audience for the event.

* Currently connected individuals
* Tangentially connected individuals
* Previously connected individuals
* Unconnected individuals
* Other

**What does your target audience enjoy?** To get the answer to this question, you may need to talk to someone in the target audience. Unless the group making the decision is representative of the target audience, don’t assume you know what they would enjoy. Here are a few possibilities:

* Food
* Conversation on specific topics
* Physical activities (hiking, gardening, yoga, etc.)
* Games (playing games together, attending games, etc.)
* Other

**What resources does the ministry realistically have to invest in a one-time project?** Use the following categories to list potential resources.

* People resources
* Facilities resources
* Connections in the Community
* Financial Resources
* Communication Resources

**What has made previous events at the congregation or in the community successful?** Don’t try to recreate something from the past, but instead look for lessons or inspiration to help you plan for the future.

* Logistics
* Invitation
* Activities
* Other

**Based on the target audience, available resources, and local experience, what possibilities do you see for relationship building activity makes sense for your congregation?** Develop ideas and then select one that feels the most appropriate for your target audience and the most manageable.

**How will you invite people to the event?** Personal invitations are always most impactful.

* Personal invitations including in-person asks and phone calls
* General announcements including bulletins, newsletters, worship announcements
* Social Media
* Other community announcements

**What does success look like?** Outline desirable and achievable outcomes prior to the event and make those hoped for outcomes known to the leadership of the event and congregation. Clear expectations allows for better evaluation and for the ability to more easily celebrate success.

**Turn the plan into Action**. Once you have an idea, then answer the following questions.

* Who will lead the team to plan and implement this idea?
* Who might be good team members? (Could be folks in the congregation or in the community)
* When will the event take place?
  + Date
  + Time
* Where will the event take place?
  + Is the space reserved on the appropriate calendar?
  + Who is the main contact person for the space?
* What resources are we planning to use?
* Working backwards from the event date, create a event schedule noting dates when particular tasks need to be accomplished. The schedule could be highly detailed or simply note what needs to happen. For example, the schedule could list what takes place:
  + Day of the Event
  + One Day before the Event
  + Once Week before the Event
  + One Month before the Event
* How will we invite people to the event?
  + What approaches, tools, and avenues of communication will we use?
  + When will we begin promotion?
  + Will we ask for RSVPs?
  + What approaches are most effective to communicate ‘One week from today” and ‘Happening tomorrow’ reminders and who will be responsible for those reminders?
* Thank Yous
  + Who will express thanks to those who helped lead and those who participated?
  + When will the thank yous be shared?
* Evaluation
  + How did the event measure up to our hopes and expectations?
  + When will the planning team sit down after the event to ask:
    - What worked well?
    - What did we learn?
    - How could we make an event like this better in the future?