

Resort/Leisure Missions Strategy

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Leisure — “free time; time off from work; discretionary time; the activity, or inactivity, pursued during one’s free time; freedom from time-consuming responsibilities or activities; qualitative rest or reflection.”

Leisure is a word that means many things to many people: relaxation, recreation, time away from responsibilities, play, time to recharge batteries or get things back into focus, recreation. People spend their leisure time in all sorts of ways, in all sorts of places.

Leisure has become a significant influence in the United States during the past 40 years. This has been the first time in history when leisure has been available to the population as a whole and not just the privilege of the very wealthy. Recent studies indicate that the average American enjoys about 130 leisure days each year. In comparison, a privileged citizen of first-century Rome could look forward to only half that many days free.

The extent of the impact of leisure on American culture can be examined by looking at business statistics. In 1985 travel/tourism was the nation’s second largest employer with 4.5 million related jobs, and the third largest retail industry with \$255 billion in income. By 1995 travel and tourism accounted for more than \$400 billion in annual spending, and recreation and related activities generated an additional \$300 billion per year.

In 1997, the United States welcomed over 48 million international visitors who spent an estimated \$75 billion while here. Each year resort/leisure businesses produce billions of dollars in federal, state, and local tax revenue. That is why state travel and tourism commissions budget millions in ongoing efforts to entice visitors to leisure attractions in their states.

Obviously, leisure is an important facet of life in North America. Therefore, ministry and outreach to people in leisure settings and lifestyle groups should be an important priority for those who want to impact our culture and society with the good news of Jesus Christ.

“Resort/leisure missions” is not a term that refers to playing at missions, but rather it means a serious commitment of missions outreach to people found in the play and leisure areas of life. Resort/leisure missions are Biblical missions carried out to reach persons of various lifestyles found in all types of resort and leisure settings.

A “resort/leisure setting” is defined as any private, public, commercial, or government administered location or special event, established or set aside for people to spend leisure time, whether away from, or near to, their primary residence.

The resort/leisure setting of ministry may be a city park, a festival marketplace, a county lake, a local campground, or a weekend flea market. Or the resort/leisure setting could be a world renowned destination ski area, ocean beach resort, historic site, national park, commercial leisure attraction, or special event. Wherever people gather on leisure, that is a setting with a potential for resort/leisure missions.

A number of Christians are already involved in reaching out with the gospel to people who live, work, and visit in resort/leisure settings. These individuals and churches are seeking ways to minister in Christ's name not only because of the many human needs that soon become evident in such leisure settings, but because leisure itself may provide the best opportunity for sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with people who may never attend anyone's church. People on leisure tend to be open to new ideas and relationships and the nature of resort/leisure settings often encourages friendly dialogue and discussion.

In addition, our whole society needs a healthy understanding of what leisure is truly supposed to be. As people who have experienced the fullness of life that comes through waiting upon the Lord, Christians have the responsibility of helping those around us discover that true leisure is far more than filling discretionary time with empty and meaningless diversions and selfish and destructive pursuits. Through our contact with the leisure aspect of contemporary culture, we can demonstrate those central truths of Scripture that give meaning to a balanced and Biblical view of work, leisure, and rest.

A Strategic Approach to Resort/Leisure Missions

This paper should be thought of as a tool designed to enable those using it to see more clearly the people and settings with whom God is working, and then to respond appropriately to these opportunities for outreach as Jesus would. The prayerful study and application of the concepts presented in this strategy for resort/leisure missions should help those using this resource tool to:

- Clarify overall ministry objectives-understand what is the basic purpose of being on mission.
- Understand the need to stop, look, and listen-watch and see what God's priorities are: where He is at work.
- Identify the "touch points" of possible ministry contact-find those special needs, aspirations, and opportunities that call for a biblically-based response.
- Establish specifically what God would have us, as His children, to be doing-answer clearly and boldly the questions:
"What would Jesus do in this setting?"
"How would He have us, His body, respond to these ministry opportunities in the light of the Father's will?"
- Communicate to God's people both the geographic and ethnic settings of the Father's activity-discover the places and people groups with which He would have us work.

Since the strategy concepts and ministry ideas presented here are based on approaches that have already proven effective in reaching people in leisure environments, this material should prove particularly helpful in developing outreach to people with lifestyles that include a significant focus on leisure.

"The strength of a man consists in finding the way God is going, and going that way."

Henry Ward Beecher

The Process for Implementing Resort/Leisure Missions:

UNDERSTAND THE BIBLICAL BASIS OF MISSIONS

To most effectively reach people in leisure settings and lifestyle groups with the good news of Jesus Christ, it is first necessary to have a solid foundation upon which the specific

structures of ministry and outreach will be based. This foundation is down only through a clear understanding of the biblical basis of missions.

Missions, in any setting, is the redemptive enterprise of God wherein He “sends” first Himself and then those who go on His behalf to alienated people in order that these people might be reconciled to God Himself, then to themselves, and to one another.

Jesus is the ultimate expression of the missionary heart of God, having been “sent” by the Father to “save His people from their sins.” And as the incarnation of God’s love on mission, Jesus modeled the servanthood nature of those who would go out on His Father’s behalf. He identified His ministry as that of a servant in Luke 4, lived as a servant from His baptism through His resurrection, and commissioned His disciples to be the same kind of “sent ones” as He had been (See John 20:21).

Jesus challenges all of His disciples to a lifestyle of being on mission-“as you go,” instructing them to witness (See Luke 24:48, Acts 1:8), proclaim (See Mark 16:15), and disciple (See Matt. 28:19-20). The verbal expression of the gospel is to be authenticated by the servant lives of His disciples. The world is to know the reality of the Incarnation even into this present age through the loving compassion and concern of the church, the body of Christ.

And the nature of the church’s ministry on behalf of the kingdom of God is incarnational-being Christ’s body about the business and concerns of the Father (See John 20:21; Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12:12-31; Eph. 4:1-16).

We are reminded that it is the Father’s desire that all people everywhere be restored to a right relationship to Him through Christ (See 2 Cor. 5:14-21; 2 Pet. 3:9). This outreach of the gospel is to be extended to all people regardless of nationality, education, location, lifestyle or any other differentiation. We are told that the good news is to be proclaimed to the whole realm of God’s creation (See Mark 16:15). In fact, the Bible says that every part of the created order is longing for the restoration of humankind through the liberating transformation of each person through the new life possible in Christ (See Rom. 8:18-25).

The missions activity of Christians is to begin within the context of a local body of disciples and extend itself in ever increasing outreach to the entire world (See Acts 1:8). The Spirit of Christ gives to every disciple specific enablings (See 1 Cor. 12:4-11), which, when developed, become the means of an effective ministry of reconciliation in the name of the Lord Jesus (2 Cor. 5:17-21).

In order to be understood, the message of Christ’s redemptive love must be communicated in a manner and language that is clear and meaningful to those who receive it. Therefore, the Lord calls out from His church certain individuals and enables them with specific cross-cultural skills to be “apostles” within particular settings, cultures, or lifestyles.

These “sent ones” are given to the churches in order that they might facilitate the entering of new mission settings and equip the members of local congregations to be on mission as the Spirit of Christ directs them (See Eph. 4:11-13). All members of the Body of Christ have the promise of the abiding presence of their Lord through the empowering of His Holy Spirit as they go out into the world as ambassadors of His kingdom (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). As people in a new group or setting respond positively to the gospel and commit themselves to the lordship of Jesus Christ, they are often brought together through the leading of the

Holy Spirit to become a local and indigenous body of believers witnessing to the reality of God's reconciling power and presence in their particular setting (See Acts 2:41- 47).

Just as there are no classes or groups of people whom the redemptive message of God's love in Christ does not seek to reach, there are no areas and aspects of life with which the Father is not concerned. And this includes the leisure side of life.

The issue of humankind's need for rest is addressed by the Bible from the beginning (See Gen. 2:2-3; Ex. 20:8-11). A time for rest and reflection is seen not only as a vital part of people's relationship to God (See Psalm 37:7-9; Isa. 40:29-31), but also a key aspect of their relationship to the basic necessities of daily existence (See Lev. 25:1-12; Matt. 12:1-12; Mark 2:23-26).

Jesus Himself experienced the need for rest and authentic leisure as time to reflect upon and know the reality of God's renewing grace (See Luke 22:29-46; John 4:6). As His disciples, we are reminded to take time out from our busy schedules (See Mark 6:31) and to trust in the Father's care and grace (See Matt. 6:25-34).

And out of this personal experience of the true value and meaning of leisure, God calls us forth to be His leaven in a culture that is so heavily influenced by limited, and often shallow, ideas and concepts of leisure, and yet has so little time for real rest and reflection.

UNDERSTAND THE LEISURE SETTING

Each leisure setting is different. Even two lake areas, two festival marketplaces, two campgrounds, two flea markets, or two ski areas in the same vicinity will have their own distinctives. Therefore, it is important that each leisure setting be examined for its own specific nature and characteristics.

Who is in the Leisure Setting?

The population of a resort/leisure setting is more than its visitors or guests. There are those residing at or near the leisure setting or attraction who own and operate businesses, serve as managers and administrators, work for governmental agencies, or are employed in service-related industries. And there are probably a number of people who work, live, or visit in the leisure community at different seasons of the year.

The different groups of people found in leisure settings vary widely in their personal interests and characteristics. In fact, there are some types of people who might be found in a typical leisure setting that can be overlooked in a causal examination of the area. This is often true of those people who seem to be the same as the majority of the population and yet who have interests and/or lifestyles that are quite different.

Since an understanding of the population of a particular setting is essential to the development of an effective leisure ministry, the time and effort spent in getting to know the people will be a valuable investment in the long run. A good method to use in discovering the distinctive nature of a particular resort/leisure setting is to do a survey using a format similar to the one that immediately follows this strategy.

Some of the things that can be revealed by a thorough survey of each leisure setting are:

- The dominant focus or expression of the leisure lifestyle core group in this particular setting.

- The composition of the population of the leisure community by length of stay, e.g., year-round residents, seasonal people, transient visitors.
- Other demographic distinctions that can best be used to describe the various population groups in the community, i.e., age, marital status, economic status, employment, ethnicity, religious orientation, and so on.
- Any distinct lifestyle subgroups that may be found in this leisure setting.

What is the Impact of Leisure on the Community?

Major leisure settings often have a distinct population with a core group whose lifestyles are primarily devoted to leisure and the benefits that might be achieved from its promotion. These distinctively leisure lifestyles will have a definite influence on the culture, mindset, behavior, and values of everyone and everything in a community strongly dominated by leisure.

Leisure-oriented lifestyles may not have so obvious an impact in those leisure settings which primarily appeal to people who seek to enjoy leisure activities only occasionally. However, the leisure orientation of contemporary society is so strong that its influence will be present in subtle ways even in these settings.

Some of the implications of this leisure orientation in contemporary life are:

- Those who are a part of a leisure lifestyle usually get their sense of identity from the way they play, rather than from their work or an allegiance to an ideal or some type of Supreme Being.
- Most of those who have adopted a leisure lifestyle have an orientation towards a child-type ego state, at least in their leisure pursuits. They focus on the benefits of fun, pleasure, entertainment, and enjoyment.
- Material and economic benefits are usually the primary considerations for those providing services to those on leisure. However, many service and management personnel in leisure-oriented businesses choose such occupations so they can also enjoy the leisure benefits.
- Many people who do not maintain a leisure lifestyle also enjoy the benefits of leisure. They may, for example, focus on the benefits of rest, relaxation, or renewal. This would even be true of people who are seriously committed to a work ethic and view leisure as a way of improving the quality or quantity of one's work output.

What Attracts People to this Setting?

It is important to identify those attractions and activities which draw people to this particular leisure setting. These might be recreational opportunities, sightseeing in areas with historic and geographic significance, special events, festival shopping, restaurants, hobby and trade conventions, family reunions, and just about anything else that would entice people to spend their leisure time in a specific place.

In order to understand what goes in to attracting people to a particular leisure setting, it is vital to know how people spend their time in and around each part of the leisure environment, and how long they stay in the area. For instance, if a setting has a special event as a primary part of its appeal, the scheduling of that event can affect the types of people that attend. As an example, an Oktoberfest celebration held in the middle of the week would not be expected to attract many families with school-age children.

What Other Dynamics are at Work in this Leisure Setting?

Every leisure setting or community has its own internal dynamics. People with missions leadership responsibilities should seek to understand these dynamics as much as possible:

- Who are the key decision makers and influential individuals and groups within the leisure community?
- What sort of image does this leisure environment have? What identity has it established for itself? Is this the same image as the one that its leadership or management seeks to promote?
- Where and how does this leisure setting market itself? (e.g., family, singles, seasonal, year-round) Where do most of the people who visit this setting actually come from?
- What human services already exist in the leisure setting?
- What religious orientations and/or activities already exist in the leisure setting?

IDENTIFY PERCEIVED NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE PEOPLE

The meeting of people's physical needs or personal aspirations will not be the main objective of missions outreach. However, needs and aspirations are "touch points" where people can be awakened to the presence of Christ's body in their midst. Through such ministry actions, people can see God at work in their lives.

And so, an important key to beginning and sustaining a resort/leisure missions endeavor is the development of ministries that meet the needs and aspirations of the people in that particular setting. In order to design such ministries, the real and perceived needs and aspirations of the leisure lifestyle populations must be clearly identified.

- Each component of the leisure community may have a different set of perceived needs and aspirations. Each significant group should be examined. It is important that what people seek after, or desire for themselves, be considered in addition to the usual listings of physical, emotional, and spiritual needs. This is especially true in those leisure settings that contain upwardly mobile groups. Those who are more affluent may not consider themselves as having needs, but they usually will acknowledge aspirations. It is also important to consider the temporary concerns, as well as the ongoing needs, of each different group of people.

- Obtain the perspective of organizations or groups in the leisure setting such as: chambers of commerce, business associations, condo owners associations, service clubs, service groups (e.g., ski patrol, lifeguards, etc). At the same time, find out all you can about these organizations: why they exist; what their basic purposes and objectives are; how they see themselves in relationship to the other parts of the community, as well as to visitors in the area; and soon.

- Interview human service personnel who relate to the leisure community (e.g., law enforcement; medical and mental health; school counselors and administrators; social service, housing, employment, and other government agencies). Find out the strengths of these agencies and organizations and how well they are able to meet the needs of the community. Pay particular attention to those areas where a Christian ministry could complement the existing services available to the community.

- Consult with pastors and other religious leaders in the community to learn about how they see the significant needs and aspirations. Find out what ministry is already being provided in the area. Listen carefully to their response to the possibility of a new mission endeavor in their midst.

- Some of the best clues to needs, aspirations, and other touch points in a particular leisure setting will come from personal observations and spontaneous conversations with people who live, work, or visit there.

DEVELOP A STATEMENT OF MISSION PURPOSE

A statement of mission purpose is a single statement that expresses the reason for the existence of the resort/leisure missions ministry. This mission statement sets forth the common ground upon which all who participate in a resort/leisure missions endeavor are to base their particular ministry response. It will tell to all who read it:

- “What we see as God’s will and purpose for us.”
- “What we are really trying to do.”
- “Who intends to do what for whom.”

The statement of purpose should be broad enough to include the full scope of all that the mission endeavor seeks to do, but also be narrow enough to define the limits of its ministry.

Based on this mission statement, specific objectives can be formulated and developed, e.g., evangelism, ministry, and starting and growing congregations. These objectives should express the major intentions of the ministry, and move the project towards fulfilling the stated purpose of the resort/leisure missions endeavor.

ENVISION MINISTRIES TO FULFILL PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

This is the dreaming stage. The missions leadership will now be familiar with the leisure setting, and will have identified potential touch points for ministry—both the real, as well as perceived, needs and aspirations of the people. With the stated purpose of the resort/leisure missions endeavor clearly in mind, various creative and innovative approaches for meeting needs and addressing aspirations should be considered. Do not let concern for the possible lack of resources or other potential limitations hamper the scope of your brainstorming. This process of envisioning ministries will be especially significant if it is shared by those who will be called upon to commit themselves to the beginning and continuation of the ministry.

It might be helpful for those who are involved in the project (church missions development council, associational missions development program, leisure missions committee, etc.) to consider the following question:

“If this ministry was to follow through without any human limitations and do what we feel God would have us do in response to the observed needs and aspirations of the people in this leisure setting, what all would we be doing?”

Remember, at this point of envisioning potential ministry possibilities, premature consideration of the availability of resources or other perceived limitations could seriously restrict the brainstorming process. It is hoped that all who participate in this time of dreaming will be people who are open to the creative and innovative possibilities for ministry that the Holy Spirit can, and does, reveal to the people of God.

The listing that follows shows some dreams from other leisure settings that became realities. It is only meant to be used to get the ideas flowing. People in each leisure setting should dream about and discover the many other possibilities that fit their particular situation.

POSSIBLE RESORT/LEISURE MISSIONS PROJECTS:

- Late night Bible study for employees of leisure-oriented businesses.
- Contemporary Christian concerts.
- Information center for visitors and guests.
- Day camp for children of employees or visitors.

- New congregation to relate to the leisure community.
- Hostel for transient guests and visitors.
- Listing of “bed and breakfast” accommodations operated by Christians.
- Campground creative worship service.
- Performing artists circulating through the leisure setting (e.g., mimes, clowns, puppeteers, illusionists, street drama/guerrilla theater).
- Demonstration area at arts and crafts festival.
- Counseling center available to all segments of the leisure setting’s population.
- Chaplains for shopkeepers and merchants.
- Cup of cold water booth with Scripture selections and free information available.
- Christian dinner theater.
- Worship walk at scenic attraction.
- Recreation programs for youth and others.
- Senior adult activities and/or support center.
- Scriptures as gifts to international visitors.
- Hospitality/welcome center booth at special events.
- Trading libraries at public or private marinas.

ADDITIONAL MINISTRY IDEAS:

DEVELOP A MINISTRY DESIGN

Determine Priorities for the Resort/Leisure Ministry.

Probably many opportunities for ministry will have now been envisioned. Now the missions leadership must set some priorities, for it will be necessary to focus attention on those ministry opportunities that are the most important. Priorities should be set on the basis of two considerations:

- What are the first things that must be done to begin meeting the objectives of the mission endeavor and ultimately fulfill its purpose?
- What are the most pressing human needs and aspirations observed in this leisure setting that require a biblical response?

It is best to begin with one or two projects that will contribute to the objectives of the ministry, rather than attempting to meet all needs or beginning too many projects at once.

Some dreams may have to be postponed until roadblocks can be removed or changed. It should be remembered, however, that the presence of seemingly insurmountable obstacles have sometimes led to the development of more appropriate and effective ministries than would have otherwise been attempted.

Calculate Resources Needed to Conduct Ministry.

For each ministry project contemplated, the missions leadership needs to determine what resources will be needed: personnel, facilities, equipment, logistical support, supplies, finances, and so forth.

Restrictions, regulations, and other constraints must be taken into account when determining potential ministry assets and liabilities. Governmental regulations on the use of facilities, types of activities prohibited by the management, ministry directions not acceptable to the missions support base, and similar concerns can all have a significant impact on the particular focus of the missions endeavor.

Some essential resources, such as good will and trust, are not as tangible as the others, but they may well be the most important. Relationships must be developed with the secular leadership of the leisure setting and community, as well as with the missions administrators who are responsible for denominational resources. In both arenas of interpersonal relationships, the leaders of local leisure missions projects will probably be called upon to “pay their dues” before they are fully accepted by the persons who have responsibility for the setting where the mission endeavors are proposed. In many cases, it will be necessary to prove that expressed concern is genuine and that those who would minister in a particular setting have a sincere commitment to its people and culture.

Plan the Actual Ministry Design.

Action plans that contribute to the established objectives of the leisure missions endeavor should now be set. These will be the actual ministry activities by which the mission work will be done. Each of these action plans (goals) should be:

- Specific-The ministry activity should clearly contribute to a stated objective of the missions endeavor.
- Measurable-Every member of the missions team should know what the desired outcome of the missions activity is, as well as how and when they can tell that the objectives have been achieved.
- Attainable-The action plan should be realistic and workable.
- Relevant- The activity should clearly contribute to the objectives of the missions endeavor.
- Trackable-Each goal or action plan should be something that can be observed and evaluated in light of the established objectives.

It is helpful to develop job descriptions or covenants for each person working in the ministry so that every member of the team will know what is expected of them.

- The resort/leisure missions project director, for example, usually would be given the assignment to develop missions awareness, model concepts and styles of ministry, equip and supervise the staff, and administer the overall missions project.
- Other staff persons, whether paid or volunteer, should each have a clear job description that outlines the duties and expectations of his or her service.

Any type of missions enterprise functions best when it is sponsored by a local congregation situated as close as possible to the missions setting which works cooperatively with other mission-minded congregations in providing the resources needed for the ministry endeavor. When a missions enterprise is conducted in a setting where there is no local body of believers ministering to a particular group of people, it should intend to lead to the formation of a new Christian fellowship. As people in a group or setting respond to the gospel of Christ, they can become a local and indigenous body of believers in that particular setting. This new group may take the form of a Bible study group, a prayer fellowship or network, or even formally organize as a mission congregation.

PREPARE FOR MINISTRY ACTIVITIES:

Enlist Ministry Personnel.

Seek out Christians who are willing to use their skills and spiritual gifts to accomplish the missions activities of the ministry. Those members of the church (or churches) sponsoring the mission work who have expressed interest in the leisure setting should be encouraged to

be open to God's leadership regarding their participation in the leisure mission ministries. Christians who already have a relationship to the ministry's sponsor or who live close to the missions setting should have the first opportunity for involvement in the project, since it will be their community and neighbors who will be a primary focus of ministry outreach.

Other Christian individuals and groups with specific gifts that can contribute to the objectives of the resort/leisure ministry may also respond to the opportunities for volunteer missions service. Those enlisted from outside the sponsoring church or association might include volunteers assigned through the North American Mission Board (NAMB):

- Adult volunteers serving in either Mission Service Corps (MSC) (one year or longer) or Missions on Short Term (MOST) (one week to one year).
- Recent college graduates serving in the two-year US/C-2 program.
- College students serving as summer or semester missionaries, Innovators, or in SPOTS teams.
- Older high school students in mission youth groups or serving individually as

Sojourners.

All missions volunteers need to commit themselves to the stated purpose and objectives of the leisure missions endeavor. (This is true whether they are an individual or part of a large group; whether local or coming from a great distance; and whether recruited through state conventions, Baptist Student Unions, NAMB, and Woman's Missionary Union, or discovered through a direct partnership linkage.) Further, it is important that all volunteers identify themselves as a part of the local missions project and its sponsors. This is particularly true of those coming as a group from outside the local area.

Train Volunteers for Ministry.

Orient all individuals and groups participating in the ministry to both the mission project and the leisure setting. Specific training should be provided for any ministry activity expected of a volunteer working in the resort/leisure ministry. All ministry personnel should be encouraged and equipped to best use their gifts and abilities in contributing to the objectives and goals of the missions enterprise.

Secure Resources Needed for Ministry Activities.

Insure that the materials, equipment, and supplies required for all ministry activities will be on hand or readily available when they are needed. If resources need to be ordered, make sure that the orders are placed well enough in advance to receive these materials in time for orientation and training. Ministry personnel should be familiar with the actual materials they will be using in the various ministry activities. In addition, having items on hand before they are actually needed can help reduce the amount of stress on those responsible for the ministry. And it is usually easier to arrange for storage ahead of time than to search and scavenge for essential resources at the last minute.

Provide for Logistical Support.

Arrangements should be made for the necessary support of ministry personnel and activities. This includes the feeding and housing of volunteers, transportation, scheduling, communication, publicity, and such other things that are essential to the smooth running of the project.

CARRY OUT MINISTRY ACTIVITIES AND PLANS

Maintain an Attitude of Dependence on God.

Individually, and as a team, those serving in the leisure missions project must remember that ministry activities are to be conducted under God's leadership and in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is often easy to become caught up in the hurry and pressures of carrying out the various aspects of the ministry and lose sight of the One for Whom, and through Whom, all the effort is actually being done.

Continue Being Sensitive to People.

Ministry is concern for people in the love of Christ. The activities are always secondary to the people they are designed to serve. Take care lest the activities or performances become ends in themselves. The purpose of the ministry is not to carry on a certain amount of activity, but to impact people with genuine love based on the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Conduct Quality Programming.

Most people in leisure settings are from those segments of society that usually expect and experience quality in their leisure pursuits. Therefore, it will be necessary to provide a similar level of quality and expertise in any Christian ministry designed for them. In addition, there may be situations where people will not respond to a specific service or ministry unless they can pay something for it-because they question whether anything of quality could be free.

Be Open and Flexible.

People on leisure do not fit into molds. The most expected feature of a leisure setting is the unexpected. The secular population is not likely to approach play with Christian values and morals in mind. Without compromising your own standards, maintain a nonjudgmental attitude. Be ready to adapt to new circumstances that may arise.

Provide Supportive Supervision for Ministry Personnel.

Supervision is the process of facilitating success in both task performance and personal growth through the carrying out of ministry activities. All personnel, whether paid or volunteer, should have supportive supervision designed to help them accomplish their ministry objectives and to grow and mature in their personal pilgrimage.

Conferences and workshops are provided by NAMB to help equip mission leaders in the principles of supervision and the effective and creative utilization of volunteers.

PROVIDE FOLLOW UP FOR MINISTRY ACTIVITIES

Follow Up on People Ministered To.

Disciple those who become Christians through the outreach of the leisure ministry for as long as they are in the leisure setting. Help them become involved in an active and loving congregation or fellowship if they will be in the local area for awhile. Encourage them to seek out the fellowship of other Christian believers if they move to another area.

Develop systems of referral for those who are open to Christian ministry but are leaving the leisure setting. This is especially important for those people who may not have made a commitment to Christ, but who have an interest and openness to the gospel.

Continue to demonstrate genuine concern for those people who do not seem to respond to ministry activities with a commitment to Christ.

Develop a System of Communication.

Regular communication with those who participate in the resort/leisure ministry activities will enhance the ongoing impact of the missions endeavor. People who have been the recipients of the ministry's outreach will feel that the care and love shown to them was real and of a lasting nature. Volunteers who are serving on the leisure missions team will be encouraged to continue their involvement, and others who have contributed to the work will be reminded of the value of their investment in the ministry.

Build a System of Evaluation.

All ministry activities, procedures, and personnel should be evaluated regularly. Conduct ongoing evaluations during the course of the missions endeavor. Do an in-depth evaluation at the conclusion of each project or season.

In all of this, look to see how God is working in and through the various facets of the ministry. Be flexible and adjust your priorities to make the most of those situations where progress is being made. You may want to incorporate additional activities and reduce or remove some others. Continue to remind yourself of all the dreams and visions for the ministry that came out of the envisioning process.

Report on Mission Work.

Provide a faithful accounting of the use of ministry resources and report on ministry activities to all who have contributed to the ministry. Make an annual report and evaluation for all sponsors and missions agencies involved in the project.

Be sure to keep the Association of Resort and Leisure Ministers (ARLM) informed about your work. Doing so makes it possible for ARLM to better assist you with various aspects of your ministry, as well as tell others of your successes. The lessons that you learn during the course of ministry in your particular leisure setting can help others who are seeking to reach out to similar people and places.

INCORPORATE RESORT/LEISURE MISSIONS INTO LONG-RANGE MISSION STRATEGY

Working through the church or associational missions development council, establish a long-range plan for developing resort/leisure missions in your setting as a part of the overall missions strategy of your church or association. Include a two-year, five-year, and ten-year focus in your planning. Consider mission statements, action plans, personnel needs, calendar deadlines, finances, and so forth.

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