



WITH KENNY & ELLE

STUFF YOU CAN USE

Hi saoumyaa!

How's your Easter planning coming along? Everyone coping? Mostly? 😊 We all know Easter is one of the most chaotic times of the year in ministry, so we wanted to **make you something to help ease your mind.**

It's a pre-Easter planning checklist!

But don't think of this checklist as *even more stuff to do*. (We know your to-do list is already pretty full.) Think of it as a way to help you...

- Celebrate what **you've already done well.**
- Identify a few things you **can improve last-minute!**
- Notice the things you **won't have time for this year**, but that you can definitely **do better next year.** (Because Easter does, in fact, happen every... single... year.)

Oh, and by the way, hi! 🙌 This is a new email series we'll be sending you every week. It'll be full of free training to help you, your kids or teenagers, and your ministry all *grow*—in a healthy way. 🌱

Okay, now let's get back to Easter, because we've only got 2 weeks and the clock is ticking!

So in these next two weeks, here's what we suggest:

1. **Print this email** (or copy and paste it into your favorite note-taking place).
2. **Color-code each item on the checklist.**
 - ✅ If you've got an item covered, mark it green!
 - ⚠️ If you plan to work on it before Easter, mark it yellow!
 - ❌ If you don't have time for it this year, mark it red!
3. **After Easter is over, revisit the checklist.** Once you've taken a nap (or twelve) post-Easter, take some notes...
 - ✅⚠️ Did these parts of your Easter planning go as well as you'd hoped? What do you want to repeat next year? What can you do to make them even better?
 - ❌ Next year, which of these to-dos do you want to prioritize? What will it take to get them done? When will you need to start planning?

Okay, ready for that checklist? We've split it up by area of focus! Let's get started.

EASTER OUTREACH

Easter is a natural time in the year for folks to show up to your church for the very first time, or the first time in a very long time!

Advertise your church services publicly. Where and how can you let your community know when your Easter services will be happening? Consider...

- Your church's social media accounts
- A special Easter page on your church website
- Local news outlets
- Local community websites, bulletin boards, newsletters, radio stations, or publications
- Paid online ads

Develop an invitation strategy. How will you encourage kids, teenagers, and families to invite others to your church's Easter services?

Prepare your invitation supplies. What supplies will you need to give kids, teenagers, and families in order to make inviting others easy? You might print your service times or a QR code on flyers, bookmarks, or even a package of Peeps with a note that says, "Tell Your Peeps."

Review your attendance trends. How many new people typically show up on Easter? With this year's outreach efforts, and previous years' trends in mind, what do you think this year's attendance will look like?

Update your website and social media. Be sure all information is correct and important links are working.

FIRST-TIME VISITORS

Once a new (or mostly-new) family shows up at your church for Easter Sunday, what's the plan? How will you make sure their experience is so great they'll actually want to come back?

Design and print flyers, brochures, and handouts with important information about your church. You might include...

- A brochure about each ministry in your church they might be interested in
- Fun (and age-specific) invitations to each of your ministries
- A calendar of upcoming events for each age group
- A teaser of your upcoming teaching series for each age group

Prepare visitor bags for every age group. You might include...

- Information about your church
- Fun (and age-specific) invitations to return next week
- A calendar of upcoming events
- A teaser of your upcoming teaching series
- Custom-printed swag from your ministry
- A nice snack
- A handwritten note
- Coupon for a free drink or snack at your church cafe
- A fun sticker just for visitors

Give new families your ministry contact information. Include a phone number, email address, social media handles, website, and the names of specific team members they can reach.

Make opting in to communication easy. For visitors who want to stay in touch with your church, make it easy to sign up for updates. We recommend building a landing page on your website that lets visitors sign up for emails and text messages, or contact your church. Then print cards with a QR code leading to that page and post it on the backs of your seats.

Make the weeks after Easter appealing. After Easter is over, what specific events or activities might draw visitors back to your church? Is it a parent workshop on a helpful topic? VBS over the summer? Silly games every week? Connection to a small group? Identify what's most appealing and then tell them about it!

Plan your follow-up. Before they ever show up on Easter, you should already have a plan in place for how you'll follow up when Easter is over. You might...

Send a text message by Monday. Say thanks for coming!

Send postcards by Tuesday. Make sure they're printed in advance.

Send a voice memo to anyone you personally connected with and want to stay in touch with.

Write and schedule a sequence of follow-up emails to all visitors who requested information.

Recruit volunteers to make all this follow-up happen.

Audit your ministry through the eyes of a visitor. You may need to recruit a friend with a fresh set of eyes to do this with you. Consider...

Parking. If you expect parking will be an issue, consider reserving spaces just for first-time guests. Get signs made with arrows and instructions on how they'll let your parking lot team know they're new.

Signage. If you'd never been to your church before, where would you get lost or confused? Make signs, outside and inside, for key places like Information, Bathrooms, Parking, Kids Ministry, Youth Ministry, etc.

Names. We love to use weird names for things, but visitors don't know where your "fireside room" is or who your "Golden Eagles" ministry is for. Use clear language instead of insider terms.

Information. If you don't already have one, consider setting up a special information center. Make sure it's stocked with up-to-date information on all your ministries and upcoming events, as well as friendly volunteers.

Greeters. If you've recruited new volunteers to help with greeting, give them a simple script for welcoming new kids, teenagers, or families. People get a little awkward around new folks sometimes.

Language. Review your upcoming worship songs, teaching points, and media: is it full of lots of Christianese that visitors might struggle to understand? Do you sing a lot about blood? Are you talking about people, places, and ideas from the Bible without really explaining them? Are you making jokes or references only regular attendees would understand?

Disabilities and accessibility. Some of your newcomers may be showing up with disabilities that require special care, so make sure you've considered...

Easy-to-access information about your special needs ministries for families with questions.

Training for your volunteers about how your church supports and includes kids, teenagers, and adults with disabilities.

Handicap spaces in your parking lot (in a 1:25 ratio).

Ramps, elevators, and lifts for wheelchair or scooter users.

- Automatic doors** or volunteers to open manual doors.
- Wheelchair spaces** in your seating areas.
- Aisles at least 36" wide** to make room for wheelchairs and scooters. (Don't try to create more seating at the expense of accessibility and safety!)
- Sign language and/or closed captioning** for the Deaf or hearing-impaired.
- Accessible web pages** for blind or visually impaired visitors.
- Clear, high-contrast, or braille signage.**



ENVIRONMENT

Easter is a pretty special day, so why not make your kids, youth, and adult environments all a little extra special?

- Clean up!** You've got company coming over, so think "spring cleaning." Do the repairs you've been putting off. Cover that open socket in the preschool room, hide that pile of stuff in the corner of the youth area, get the crushed Cheez-Its out of the carpet, and figure out where that weird smell is coming from.
- Check your tech.** Then double-check! Are all the computers, TVs, and speakers working?
- Plan something fun.** Set up simple family photo backdrop with an Easter-ish backdrop and a volunteer photographer. Create a quick and easy craft station. Prepare a few minute-to-win-it-style games families can play in between services.
- Make "Worship With Me" Bags** for kids going to the adult worship service. Consider including...
 - Clipboard (to be returned at the end of service) or blank small pizza box so kids have a hard surface to write on.
 - Coloring pages or activity sheets
 - Triangular crayons that don't roll around
 - A QR code to a kid-friendly Bible app, website, or online media you recommend
 - Ribbon streamers to use during worship music time
 - An Easter bingo card, using words or images they might hear or see during the service
 - Information for parents about your kids ministry

- ❑ **Stock your nursery with extra wipes and diapers.** Because Easter is a lot.
- ❑ **Buy some ponchos.** If you're doing anything messy during your games or activities, provide ponchos or aprons to protect kids' Easter Sunday fit.
- ❑ **Keep your kids & youth ministry teaching shorter than usual.** This will help you account for the day's energy, guests, and unexpected delays, both in your services and the adult ones.

VOLUNTEERS

You're definitely going to need more volunteers than usual on Easter Sunday, so here are a few things to help make this easier...

- ❑ **Review your attendance trends.** Based on your attendance trends and expectations, do you have enough volunteers to staff your ministry safely and intentionally?
- ❑ **Make sure every volunteer team is prepared for Easter.** You may not be responsible for the parking lot team, greeter team, cafe team, safety team, or other types of support teams. But if those teams aren't prepared, it can negatively impact your ministry in a big way! Consider checking in with other ministry leaders to make sure you're all on the same page.
- ❑ **Print volunteer t-shirts.** It's important your volunteers are easily identifiable, especially on Easter Sunday! If t-shirts aren't in the budget, opt for lanyards or name tags.
- ❑ **Schedule more volunteers than you think you'll need.** Some volunteers definitely won't be able to make it, even with the best intentions.
- ❑ **Pre-print extra name tags and check-in labels.** Your printers will inevitably break down or your check-in area will get backed up, so pre-printing these will help your team survive it.
- ❑ **Recruit responsible preteens and teenagers to be greeters.** This may or may not be a permanent volunteer role in your church, but it's a great way to fill out your greeter team on an important Sunday!
- ❑ **Review basic safety procedures with your volunteers.** They may have forgotten, and this is a great time for a refresher.
- ❑ **Prepare your volunteers for an influx of visitors.** Refresh your team on how to welcome and interact with new families — including greeting parents at drop-off and pick-up.
- ❑ **Identify a maximum attendance for kids and youth ministry.** It's essential that you don't allow more kids or teenagers into your ministry spaces than you can safely supervise. Identify your maximum number in advance, and enforce it.

Prepare a communication plan if your ministry maxes out. When kids and youth ministry spaces reach capacity, it can cause frustration for families who are still trying to check in their kids. Be sure to have a plan in place and coordinate with other ministry leaders to make sure those families can attend the adult service together comfortably.

Think ahead to the next "big thing." If you know in advance what your next "extra volunteers needed" season will be (summer, Christmas, VBS, special events), ask the people who served with you as a one-off for Easter to **consider joining you as a seasonal or substitute volunteer.**

TEACHING & DISCIPLESHIP

Everything we've talked about so far is *really* important... but it's also a little bit boring. So let's think about the things you're probably most excited to think about: **how you'll actually bring the good news of Jesus to life for kids and teenagers.** Here are a few things to consider as you prepare for Easter...

Plan a pre-Easter [teaching series](#). In the weeks leading up to Easter, teach about something strategic that prepares kids and teenagers for Easter Sunday. You might spend those weeks focusing on...

Jesus' life, ministry, or teachings before his death and resurrection.

Spiritual disciplines like prayer, reading the Bible, worship, or fasting (in an age-appropriate way, of course!).

Evangelism, especially if you are inviting kids and teenagers to invite their friends to church for Easter Sunday.

Plan an intentional Easter activity for kids and teenagers. We've created lots of [discipleship activities](#) that would be perfect for a bonus Easter experience, like...

A Stations of the Cross prayer experience.

A devotional leading up to Easter.

Prayer prompts during Holy Week.

Daily one-minute devotionals posted to social media.

A daily challenge delivered through text messages.

Anything that helps them **spend time with God.**

Plan a post-Easter [teaching series](#). For the weeks after Easter, consider what an appealing teaching series might be for kids or teenagers that is a next logical step after Easter

Sunday. You might focus on...

The arrival and role of the Holy Spirit, or the early church, for a chronological approach to the New Testament narrative.

Doubt and questions, which could help new students or visitors get their biggest faith questions answered.

An introduction to Jesus or to following Jesus for kids and teenagers who may have made decisions about their faith on Easter Sunday.

Provide take-homes for parents so they know what their kids are learning and can keep the conversation going at home. This is especially helpful for the parents of new kids and teenagers who are still getting acquainted with your church. These take-homes could include (and already do include, if you're using [Grow Curriculum!](#))...

The Bible verses you're teaching from.

Big Ideas to summarize the biblical truths you're teaching.

A summary of the series you're teaching.

A Parent Devotional written for grown-ups that goes along with what you're teaching.

Parent emails to keep them in the loop.

AND LAST, BUT NOT LEAST...

Breathe. Yes, Easter is busy. There's a lot to do. It feels like there is a lot riding on this day. But listen. Even if no one shows up, the WiFi goes out, your worship leader loses their voice, your best volunteers oversleep, a kid gets a super-unstoppable nosebleed, and almost everything goes wrong...

Remember:

Jesus is still alive.

Nothing is going to change that.

It's the best news ever.

And, this Easter, you get to tell someone about it.

And there you have it! **That's the end of our not-so-little Ultimate Easter Planning Checklist!** Shout out to the entire Stuff You Can Use team for helping to compile this list of to-

dos. If you don't know, our team is packed with super-smart ministry leaders from tons of different ministry contexts, and they have lots of expertise to share.

And hey, if you ever need a little help in ministry, [schedule a free Zoom call](#) with someone **from our team!** We'd love to help you and your church be even more awesome than you already are.

STUFF YOU
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P.S. Want to learn more about [Grow Curriculum](#)?

Grow is more than just curriculum. It's everything you need for an entire year of more strategic ministry!

Get a whole year of **teaching for as little as \$18/week** (with activities, handouts, graphics, videos, and more—all included). Or jump into [the full Grow strategy](#) with a year of discipleship activities, event guides, volunteer training, and parent resources, too!

Let *our* team at Grow Curriculum make ministry a little easier for *your* team this year. ❤️

Grow



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