

# Ideas for evangelism

## bags4life

### AIM

This document tells you about one churches' development an Eco-congregation that has had an effect on their town and their opportunities for evangelism. You might like to try something similar.

### INTRODUCTION

Some churches have been working towards 'Eco-Congregation' status. St Ives Free Church in Eastern Synod is one. This is their story:

#### Let me tell you: Mayor Presents Eco-congregation plaque to St Ives Free Church

On **20<sup>th</sup> March 2011** the Mayor of St Ives, David Hodge, attended a special service at the St Ives Free Church. He came to present a wooden plaque marking the award of eco-congregation status to the church.

The church set up an eco church group a couple of years ago. The group has been working both to make the church building more eco friendly and also encouraging individuals to consider a more sustainable lifestyle. The Eco-congregation Award is a national award given to churches that have worked through a churches environmental check-up, helped the whole congregation to make the link between their Christian faith and environmental concerns, taken practical action in the church, and had a positive impact on the wider community. In 2010 The Free Church was short listed for a Hunts Green Heart Community Award. There are regular displays in the Free Church giving information about green issues. Members of the church have visited the Hunts District Council's "Green House", attended the "Wave" demo in London held prior to the Copenhagen Climate Conference in December 2009, and the group has organised a variety of activities within the church.

As part of the celebration the church has produced its own Fairtrade and Eco-church cotton bag. The bags are made of Fairtrade cotton, and have been made by a fair trade woman's co-operative in India. St Ives Free Church is already a Fairtrade church and is well known in St Ives for its Fair Trade shop **Just Sharing** where the bags are on sale at £2.50 each.

A photograph of the bags is on the Vision4life website.

### Bags4life

Other churches have also found opportunities to have bags that can serve several purposes. As well as cutting down on the use of plastic carrier bags they can serve is opportunities for evangelism. Perhaps you have an event coming up where bags could be a useful resource. Maybe people could buy the bags or maybe you might want to give bags away- some churches have been doing this. A church in Stockport gave a bag containing a hot cross bun and a leaflet about Easter services to commuters at the local railways station on Maundy Thursday last year.

### For discussion

What would you put in your bag?

What would you say about your church?

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### Prayer

Generous God, you give us life and ask us to share it with others.

As we seek ways to share your life with the world,

help us to have bags of courage, bags of enthusiasm and bags of spirit

for the task of evangelism.

### EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

### THE NEXT STEP

There are more ideas for evangelism on the website.

### Acknowledgements

This material was submitted by St Ives Free Church. For further information please contact

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### HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group and the coordinator about general issues via the website or at [admin@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:admin@vision4life.org.uk)

Website issues can be dealt with through [web@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:web@vision4life.org.uk)

If you have comments and particularly contributions to the prayer year, you can email the V4L prayer year coordinator via [prayer@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:prayer@vision4life.org.uk)

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email: Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: [evangelism@vision4life.org.uk](mailto:evangelism@vision4life.org.uk)