

A suggestion for “refreshing” the traditional Sunday evening service in churches in that habit but not excited about doing it forever

Sunday Evenings

BECAUSE (or WHEREAS!)

Some churches that have a second different worship or preaching service on Sunday evening wonder why.

Some churches have not changed the schedule for fear of hearing a few say they think good churches have Sunday evening services (often said by people who do not attend the second time on Sundays).

It is debatable whether one pastor can preach two good different sermons every Sunday.

It is debatable whether the church attender needs or can receive two sermons every Sunday.

The original purpose for the evening “evangelistic hour” seems to have weakened. (Way back, in PA., evening services were popular for some because the church building was the only building around to have lights. Not so much today.)

Sometimes people stay so busy at church –those working the services and auxiliary ministries – are too much into church services and not enough into family or neighborhoods.

77% of pastors' wives wish their pastor-husbands did not have to do the evening service. (And 86% of statistics are made up on the spot.)

THEREFORE (or maybe try this incremental change)

Second and fourth Sundays of the month: community or small groups or ABFs meet at the church building or in homes (with those who prefer other times staying with those).

Most churches have groups of all kinds, and sometimes this is confusing. These would be for community (including study, care, ministry as a group) and this format would give groups publicity boost, especially if you had a goal to see 50% or so of the people in worship services also in a group.

First Sunday of the month: a special “family reunion” service called “Celebration” or “First Sunday” or something more inviting.

With these very interesting and edifying ingredients and suggested minutes:

12 great hymns of the church This is warmly received by the older people who grew up with these songs and gave money and time for the foundations of the church; but it is also to teach the great theology of the best of the strong hymns (not the less solid gospel songs or “all skate” melodies).

5 interview of the emotion of someone who serves in the church (To thank them but also to motivate others.)

10 “Ten Most important Decisions or Events of My Life” –starting with staff and then board *(This is one of the best testimonials, revealing God’s grace and shepherding in a life and also showing why a person is the way he or she is. Great way for staff to get to know each other in staff meetings also.)*

12 the best of newer songs for all to sing

10 pastoral staff leads carefully planned P-R-A-Y pastoral prayer -- Praise, Repent (quiet time, about character, Ask, Yield (to our Lord and Scripture of the evening. During the “Ask,” part, ask people to stand to represent themselves or someone they love before the moment you pray for people who need healing of any kind. Then they are seated as the prayer continues. Same for your prayers for salvation or godly wisdom. Same for your prayers for students or service people who are away.

It is a simple but amazing way to have people involved in the prayer, but also to feel that the church is praying for them. If planned well, this may be the highlight of the first Sunday evenings!

0 no offering

8 baptisms with interviews

15 pastoral talk on the great doctrines of the church: “Tallest Doctrines Talk” -- With thoughts on the vision of the church as appropriate or related to that doctrine. This can be a very strong pastoral talk rather than a typical sermon.

*** 72 minute service

This careful change may work so well it is not an incremental change to something, but a permanent (for a time!) new format for Sunday evenings.

And over 78% of the Sunday crowd will really like it.

21% will not even notice it happened.

1% will think it is not spiritual, and “not the way the early church did it” (or at least the ones in PA.)

88% of pastors’ wives will be very excited.