

Six Ways to Beat the Summer Slump

Summer often means vacation time and travel for many church members. It also means lower attendance and participation numbers in many churches.

While you'll likely experience some summer lull, you can help minimize this by utilizing one or more of these tips for engaging your church members this summer.

1. **Create a weekly prayer emphasis.** Summer is a busy time for most student ministries and children's ministries. You likely have camps, mission trips, and Vacation Bible School going throughout the summer. Highlight these events with a weekly prayer emphasis spotlight in the service and in your church newsletter.
2. **Report on the results of your summer activities.** After your church has prayed for an event, be sure to celebrate how God answered those prayers. These reports can help carry ministry momentum through the summer into the fall when you kick things off again.
3. **Consider hosting special events each month and emphasize inviting others.** Maybe you have a potluck at church or an ice cream social at a local park. Outside, summer-themed events can easily be used to invite friends and neighbors to church-related events.
4. **Participate in summer community events.** Nearly every town in America does something for July 4 (or July 1 for our Canadian readers). It's great that some churches have the resources to host a community celebration, but 99% can't. If you're in the 99%, make an attempt to be involved in the local community gathering this summer.
5. **Try something new.** Use the summer as a test kitchen for something you'd like to implement on an ongoing basis. Maybe it's a more casual dress code or style change. Maybe it's some new songs or stage setup. By telling your congregation that it's only for the summer, you'll have more acceptance of something new. I wouldn't necessarily use the summer to change something core to the identity of the church. Start with fringe ideas and work toward bigger change down the road.
6. **Focus on social media.** Because the summer is typically busier, use social media to keep the congregation updated. Next week, I'll focus more on this item, but brainstorm a few creative uses for Instagram, Facebook Live, Twitter, and blogs for your church to try out.

Summer doesn't have to be a dry spell in a church. In many instances, it's the busiest part of the year. Use that to your advantage and keep the momentum going.

What else would you add to this list?