

**10. Learn their Stories.** Whether you have a party or if you are out trick-or-treating with the kiddos or staying back with the other parents, ask questions...get to know their stories. Pay attention to their hearts and their felt needs. Look for opportunities to serve them later. Then, follow through and serve them later! This might actually lead to them eventually coming to faith in Jesus.

## Go to Their Place

**11. Attend the Party.** If others in your neighborhood are throwing parties, you may want to join them (if invited, of course). If you do go, bring drinks, food or whatever is needed. Then, serve by helping to clean up. Use this opportunity to deepen relationships and build gospel bridges.

**12. Join the Community.** If your community has key events, join them and invite some neighbors to go with you. Perhaps your area has a trick-or-treating event on a main street where all the businesses give out candy, the firemen give tours of the fire engines, etc. Maybe you simply have neighbors who are unchurched who invite you to go trick-or-treating with them and their kids. Go and look for ways to build bridges and connections with others (then get to know their stories along the way).

## Whatever you do, just be on mission!

Halloween is a really funny holiday when we think about it. But, it's a holiday that is so easy to build relationships, to bless the community, and start (or continue) to show off what our heavenly Father is like.

Although there are certainly things you could do during Halloween to begin having gospel conversations, remember that the real goal of these ideas are more of "pre-evangelism." This is where you begin building intentional relationships with your neighbors, hear their stories, look for felt needs that you could meet later, and look for ways to continue connections that could eventually lead to those gospel conversations.

Regardless of what you think of the holiday and its roots, our culture celebrates Halloween and we have been sent by Jesus to reach them. We all have in front of us a wide-open door for missionary engagement in our neighborhoods. October 31 is a perfect opportunity to connect with our neighbors and our community, and let our lights shine before others.

*Sources: Ideas compiled and edited with permission from [www.vergenetwork.org](http://www.vergenetwork.org) and *The Church at Brook Hills*.*

## Let's Hear About It!

We would love to see what you are doing to intentionally engage with your neighbors this Halloween. Take pictures throughout the night and post on social media with the following hashtags:

**#trbctally #HalloweenOutreach**



# HALLOWEEN NEIGHBORHOOD OUTREACH

Simple Ideas to Reach Out to Your  
Neighbors This Halloween

*Prepared by*



# Good Treats & Good Times

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**This coming Halloween** offers a great opportunity for many to engage in new relationships with those around us or to revisit some old relationships with new missional intentionality. Regardless of one's view of this day, there is a fact that cannot be denied: Halloween is the one day in which our neighbors are outside walking around in hordes and coming right up to our front door! Rarely do we have such an open window of opportunity to engage in this way. What should we do with that? Do we disappoint by turning the lights off and going to bed early? Or, does it seem best to turn on the lights and seize the opportunity? The latter is consistent with what Jesus said:

*"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)*

This year, when your neighbors show up for good treats to eat, let's not disappoint. Instead, let's be exceptional, and let's be more intentionally engaged.

**Here are a few simple ideas** for how you can more effectively walk through the open door that Halloween presents to us as Jesus' missionaries. Pick as many ideas as you would like. May God be glorified as we let our lights shine for HIS glory!

## Be Prayerful

**1. Pray, a lot!** This Halloween, before you do anything else, pray and ask the Spirit specifically for:

- ◆ **Open eyes** to see the real needs around you;
- ◆ **Open ears** to help you listen, care, and serve those around you; and
- ◆ **Open doors** for new relationships and gospel conversations.

## Be Prepared

**2. Decide what you will do.** Determine if you will do something special as a family, with other friends, or your small group from church. Perhaps you live in a great neighborhood full of kids, and you have the perfect yard for doing something special. Then you can simply invite a few friends to help and bring their kids to join in the fun. Or if you live in an area where you don't get many trick-or-treaters, then ask your friends or your small group if you can join their plans.

Together, decide ahead of time what you will do to reach out to others. **Keep your plans simple, enjoyable, and suitable** for your situation. The intended purpose is to create experiences that are welcoming and relational.

## Be Hospitable

**3. Be Welcoming.** Make your entry way inviting so they want to come closer and hang for a bit if possible. Consider having a **fire pit** in your front driveway and offer **coffee, hot cider, hot cocoa** and **s'mores** to the parents and trick or treaters that come to your door. Or have a decorated table with **pumpkin bread** or **cookies** for the parents and kiddos around the block. You could even put out

**dog treats** and a water bowl for the four-legged trick-or-treaters! All these ideas show that we are more than about handing out candy to kids, but we are here to bless the entire family and, in a sense, welcome you into our lives.

**4. Be Present.** Don't hide out all night or just put the candy out for kids to "self-serve." Come out to the door or hang out on the porch or driveway. And if they stop to have some cider or a cookie, get to know their names and where they live in the neighborhood.

**5. Be Encouraging.** When neighbors stop by, receive them as guests with an enthusiastic and warm welcome. Tell the kids you love their costumes and to have a great night. If they arrive dressed up in red onesies complete with horns and pitchforks, welcome them just the same way. Practice building others up with words.

**6. Give out the Best Candy.** Please, don't give out toothbrushes or pennies...kids are looking for the motherload of candy. Instead, be "that" house...the one that gives away the **best** candy. Spring for the full-sized candy bars if you can. Having a nut-free option is a nice gesture for those with allergies. Remember, we have been blessed to be a blessing.

**7. Throw a Party.** This Halloween is a great time to throw a party as a way to engage in mission with our neighbors and to practice gospel hospitality. This would serve as a non-threatening environment and an opportunity to remove unhealthy barriers for the purpose of connecting with those that you might not know very well, or even at all. You can throw a **costume party, pumpkin carving party, or cookie decorating party**. No matter what type of party you throw, make it amazing by having creative snacks (popcorn balls, candy apples, and of course, candy), a photo booth with silly props, and games for kids.

**8. Set up a Mini Trunk or Treat.** Rather than a traditional party, do a scaled-down version of the traditional Trunk-or-Treat. Park a few cars side-by-side and fill the trunks with goodies to be passed out. Consider decorating your trunk in fun, positive themes (i.e., football, fall).

**9. Set up Contests & Challenges.** If you don't want to go full-on party mode, you can at least have a few contests or challenges your guests may play to earn special or extra treats. Plan for games where everyone wins something. Here are a few easy ideas:

- ◆ **Toss for Treats:** Setup anything from a Cornhole board to a few buckets on the lawn with bean bags, or use pumpkins and Hula hoops. Speaking of hoops...
- ◆ **Hoops for Treats:** If you have a basketball hoop, use sidewalk chalk to mark shooting positions on the driveway. Mark values next to shooting positions according to difficulty.
- ◆ **Limbo for Treats:** Setup a limbo station with three pole heights of varying difficulty. Play some fun Hawaiian music.
- ◆ **I've Lost My Golf Ball:** This is an easy, fast, and fun activity for all ages. Choose a 10-12" pumpkin. Cut the top off and scrape the sides to loosen the pulp to create a mushy mess. Select 3 golf balls, each of a different color or marked with a number. Hide them in the mushy pulp. Place candy of varying types or worth in bags corresponding to the color or number. Instruct players to reach into the mushy pulp without looking in to the pumpkin and pull out a ball. Have plenty of paper towels, unscented wet wipes, and a trash can for players to clean up afterwards.
- ◆ **Look on Pinterest** for other positive, kid-friendly Halloween games and use them to interact with your neighbors.